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Towards a Theatre of Pure Eventuality: An Ontogenetic Reading of Sarah
Kane's *Crave*

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*May words cease to be arms;
means of action, means of salvation.
Let us count, rather, on disarray.*

(Blanchot 1986: 11)

*Theatre is real movement, and it extracts
real movement from all arts it employs. This is
what we are told: this movement, the essence and
the interiority of movement, is not opposition, not
mediation, but repetition.*

(Deleuze 1994: 10)

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1. Introduction: from ‘Shock-tactics’ to formal reductionism: re-visiting critical responses to Sarah Kane’s *Crave*

Sarah Kane’s irruption into London’s 1990s theatrical scene was a moment of decisive importance for British dramatic tradition and history. Critical accounts of Kane’s artistic trajectory start off with the controversial, almost scandalous premiere of *Blasted* (1995) – one of Britain’s ‘most-talked about’ and ‘least-seen’ plays – underlining the ‘morally unviable’ images of “a welter of carnage, cannibalism, male rape” (Gross in Saunders 15) that it displayed. A restless “media brouhaha” (Urban 2001: 39), as well as the immediate emergence of sensationalistic labels, were symptomatic of an era that harboured the abrupt wake-up call of a novel generation of radical and experimental playwrights. Sarah Kane and the ‘In-Yer-Face’ generation, to borrow theatre critic Aleks Sierz’s label, faced the disintegration of Communist regimes and the concomitant overarching phenomena of globalization; a moment of “political revolution globally and political inertia at home” (Saunders 2009: 1) marked the opening of the 90s decade. The *Zeitgeist* of Britain’s new writing was permeated by a sense of nihilism, despair and disorientation that theatre critics and historians have linked to the dissolution of the great projects of modernity. Mrs Thatcher’s disoriented children were breathing into the “moral wasteland” (Lane 18) that years of neoliberal rule had bequeathed, and a sense of stagnation and paralysis articulated the theatrical scene so that “the dearth of new plays”

had long sedimented as a generalized consensus. Aleks Sierz illustrates this aura of decay and disarray as follows:

Imagine being born in 1970. You're nine years old when Margaret Thatcher comes to power; for the next eighteen years – just as you're growing up intellectually and emotionally – the only people you see in power in Britain are Tories. Nothing changes; politics stagnate. . . In 1989, the Berlin Wall falls and the old ideological certainties disappear into the dustbin of history. And you're still not even twenty. In the nineties, media images of Iraq, Bosnia and Rwanda haunt your mind. Political idealism . . . is mixed with cynicism – your friends don't vote and you think all politicians are corrupt. This is the world you write about. Such writers were Thatcher's Children. (Sierz 237)

Kane's dramatic works have long been academically received as being embedded in this political, economic and philosophical epoch of 'fragmentation', uncertainty and scepticism (see Saunders 2002; 2009; 2010; Urban 2001). The fatalistic vision of the 90s' was indebted to a "a general malaise . . . characterized by defeatism and despair" (Sierz 234), which can be observed in the series of publications concerning 'the collapse of Communism', 'the end of history', 'the death of the subject', that acquired hegemonic pre-eminence in critical theory and saw its corollaries on-stage through a formal retreat from realism (see Rebellato 2017). It is not only that an "apocalyptic tone" was being perceived in British New Writing, but that it was immediately received as an expression of the 'young writers's moral scepticism and consequent nihilistic attitude towards a world in exhaustive proclamations of crisis. In his seminal work: *'Love me or Kill me': Sarah Kane and the Theatre of Extremes*, Graham Saunders outlines that the main driving force of British new writing was "a total disillusion with social decay: specifically with the breakdown of any binding moral code or common sense of decency" (2002: 5), which he relates to the increasing atomization of society, furthered by Thatcher's well-known declaration: "there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women and families". The moral outrage that Kane's first plays set forth led to an almost-hegemonic consensus that her figure epitomised "the crisis of modern drama" (Bond 2009). The teleo-eschatological vision of the 90s responds from a point of inflection in the politico-economical arena that contributed to conceptualising 'a period of crisis' as a negative movement of abandonment, despair and scepticism that still needs to find its affirmative propositions

Far from taking for granted the acclaimed 'crisis of representation' from which post-structuralist and post-dramatic approaches stem (see Delgado-García 2015; Barnett 2008), our reading will attempt to identify in which ways "representative thinking" has

foreclosed the potentiality of a radically experiential theatre to articulate a paradigm of “immanent theatre” (Cull). Barred by the horizon of the ‘*beyond* representation’, Kane’s theatre remains under-theorized in terms of movement, immanence and differential becoming. In alignment with Deleuze’s methodology, we will seek to identify different deviations in the work’s critical precedents, so as to *pervert*¹ the elements which have confined it to the structure of ‘the real’.

The caesura in Kane’s work came with her intentional disengagement from the ‘bad girl’ reputation she had popularly gained, bringing *Crave* on-stage under the pseudonym Marie Kelvedon (Sierz 2001). Her trajectory was intendedly moving away from the former “theatrical bravura” (Coveney, *Daily Mail*, 1998) of *Blasted* and *Cleansed* to a more abstract exercise of dramatic reductionism. As Saunders points out, the play’s “retreat from realism and formal characterisation” and its avoidance of realist depiction of physical and sexual violence (2002: 201) were considered as a breakthrough in her career. Although *Crave*’s first production at Edinburgh’s Traverse Theatre (1998) had a “benevolent reception” (Saunders 2002: 102), critical reviews from its posthumous revival at the Royal Court in 2001 reverberate some of the recessive ‘nihilist *topoi*’ attributed to the earlier Kane.

The reviews collected in *Theatre Record*’s archive reveal statements such as Sam Marlowe’s: “these plays [*Crave* and *4.48 Psychosis*] make clear the tedium of a life devoid of an hopeful glimmer” (Sam Marlowe, *What’s On*, 2001), or well-known critic Benedict Nightingale’s: “[*Crave*] is a woman’s post-mortem on a self as self-destructive as, sadly, turned out to be” (*The Times*, 2001). A seemingly unescapable moral desert of “desolation and hopelessness” (Marlowe) of agonic incoherence and subjective fragmentation came to dominate *Crave*’s academic reception, and it is on those lines that early Kane scholarship has based its main theoretical interpretations². It is, however,

¹ The role of ‘perversion’ in Deleuze’s thought is two-fold: at a ‘macro-level’, it defines his methodology, at a ‘micro-level’, it constitutes his concrete objects of study. Thus, the first is to be seen in *Difference and Repetition*, where Deleuze defines the ‘real’ movement of thought as a perversion of the forces which have repressed it under the power of the negative (see 1968: 157). Later on, in *The Logic of Sense* (1990), he will apply this ‘movement of thought’ to re-read Plato’s theory of Ideas. He will *pervert* the latter’s repression of simulacra to the negativity of false-pretenders, for he sees this movement to be eminently a moral one: “simulacra are built upon . . . an essential perversion or a deviation” (256), a “becoming-mad” that Plato sought to “shut up in a cavern at the bottom of the Ocean” (258) in order to erect the authenticity of representation.

² See, for instance, Saunders’s first long-study: *‘Love Me or Kill Me’: Sarah Kane and the Theatre of Extremes*. 2002, or Ken Urban’s article “An Ethics of Catastrophe: The Theatre of Sarah Kane” (2001). Beyond Aleks Sierz’ “In-Yer-Face” aesthetic paradigm (2001) Sarah Kane’s dramatic project has been

Michael Billington's suspicion that "you can actually hear the rhythms of *Godot*" which constitutes the main unifying thread of our discussion, for if Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* came to epitomise 'Absurdism' through its "existential" motives, *Crave* has receded in a similar place of negativity.

Connections between both playwrights have been drawn on the basis of avant-garde aesthetics, 'nihilism' and the formal reductionism employed in both (Angel-Perez 2013; De Vos 2011; Saunders 2010). So is so, that the lack of plot and realist character in *Crave* has led critics to believe it a modernist exercise of poetic soliloquy, a "semi-Beckettian poetic methodology of verbal despair" (qtd in Wallace 2009: 96). On those same lines, Elizabeth Angel-Perez depicts the 'linguistic turn' in *Crave* as "giving rise to absence. . . and the passage to the shadows" (3, *my translation*), conceiving the play's fragmentation of character and lack of plot as the signature of "an absent world" (4). However insightful such approaches might be, they project a conceptual framework that takes 'presence', 'identity', and 'representation' as precursors of a movement *ex negativo*, submitting themselves to the apocalyptic 'crisis of modern metaphysics' and the teleo-eschatological themes of the time. They evade the fact that "the speaking self in Kane's work, however traumatised and fragmented, remains on stage at the centre of attention" (Wallace 97), and thus that decomposition, de-personalization and fragmentation are to be considered affirmatively as ontogenetic elements of *Crave*.

The attestation that Kane's voice unfurls through the play's chiasmatic dramatic structure, the relentless disjunctions of the character's soliloquies and the fluidity with which her "non-psychological entities" (A, B, C, and M) circulate, demands a critical re-formulation of their 'vanishing' (Roberts 2015). As Rebellato contests, it is not that "playwrights are in retreat", but that their authorial withdrawal – through anonymization and disavowal of a consistent 'narrative' – points at a specific *suffering* (2013: 10). The major dramaturgical shifts of the 90s, according to him, expand the limits of "the fictional world" (14) through the emphasis on disjointedness, indeterminacy and fragmentation. It is precisely in the light of this radical way of inhabiting the stage that Deleuze's differential ontology becomes pertinent, for it will attend to the task of "describing contemporary theatrical phenomena in a positive way" (Poschmann 6), taking "disjunction" and "contradiction" as driving forces of Being. In other words, in order to

traced back to Artaud's "Theatre of Cruelty" and Howard Barker's "Theatre of Catastrophe" in multiple instances (Hansford 1999; Wallace 2010; De Vos 2010).

approach *Crave*'s formal features immanently, we ought to take disjunction as a positive and affirmative phenomenon. In *The Logic of Sense* (1990), Deleuze describes the process by which disjunction becomes inclusive as a necessary decentering of 'identity' or 'a concept of self' (LS 174). The objects of pure affirmation, therefore, are not to be thought in the convergent lines of an interpretative method – what do the characters mean? Whom are they talking to? – but rather in the divergent lines of a self-dissolving presence, through an immanent lens: how does this work? What are its *effects*?

Kane's presentation of non-psychological entities as nearly-abstract 'characters' – A, B, C and M – enables a fluid circulation of voices that escape clear referentiality. Narrative is, thus, permeated by a restless overlapping of speech and rhythmic structures, which expand language to its most affective dimension. Kane's emphasis on language as an expressive force, rather a coherent interpretable 'reality', as Saunders state, "resists rational analysis" (Saunders 2002: 107). The ontological potential of this prioritization of the affective dimension of language has been overlooked by interpretations that judge it as an exercise of ego-solipsism, devoid from dramatic weight.³ In this light, *Crave*'s 'almost-inhuman' figures have been considered to be "scarcely relating to each other", as a contradictory quartet entrenched in "monotonic mumble" (Nicholas de Jongh, *Evening Standard*, 2004) that offer no more than incomprehensibility and perplexity.⁴ Kane's eschewing of psychological-realist conceptions of 'character' and 'plot' has been carried out through an obsessive emphasis on "subjects on crisis, making and unmaking contradictory selves through language" (Wallace 97). As characters dissolve into a sea of voices, movements are reduced to repetitive patterns, narrative is no longer 'human', for it flees from its anchorage to clear referential experience. A "zone of indiscernibility" (Deleuze) overhauls the stage, so that no hermeneutic gesture would be able to restore meaning. If, instead of 'characters' we have *intensive* becomings; instead of 'life-narratives' we have *affects* and *sensation*; instead of 'referential, realist language' we have 'a language of Signs', we need a science of the sensible: a transcendental empiricism. On those lines, *Crave* arises as an affirmative portrayal of *extremity*, that is: as the attestation that individuating processes take place in the indiscernible zones of

³ "Kane is just doing herself in different voices" (Morris in De Vos 2010: 73); "These texts don't so much push at the boundaries of theatre as simply dissolve them. Just as Kane dissolved herself." (Lyn Gardner, *Guardian*, 2001: 606); "Sadly, though, in her effort to mine a vein of poetic lyricism Kane unearths no more than leaden deposits." (De Jongh, *Evening Standard*, 1998: 1153).

⁴ Multiple reactions attest to the unassimilability of *Crave*'s non-realist scenario: "watching it [*Crave*], you don't have time to work it out" (Sierz 2001: 119);

‘inclusive disjunctions’ and ‘desubjectification’, as its four *unnamed* ‘characters’ – “not anyone pulsatingly human” (Michael Coveney, *Daily Mail*, 1998) – already suggest.

We have contextualised Kane’s reception and criticism within the wider context of the apocalyptic teleo-eschatological tone of the 90s. However, we have suggested that several of her driving forces could potentially re-configure our understanding of ontology and representation after the so-called “death of the character” (Fuchs 1996). Kane’s experiential theatre, as we will see, does not cling to the ‘brutalist’ aesthetics of In-Yer-face ‘shock-tactics’, but rather to the cruelty of an un-recognizable *encounter* with ‘the different’. In this lines, the unrecognizability of any human entity or formulable external reality would not be a signature of ‘crisis’, but rather an extreme exploration of the “broken connections which traverse the fragments of a dissolved self” (Deleuze 145), and thus place the ‘I’ in a pure encounter with the “dark precursors” of its own differential nature.

On a broader spectrum, this dissertation will contextualise Kane’s abrupt ‘caesura’ within the framework of affirmative philosophy, for if she is to inherit anyhow Artaud’s “theatre of cruelty”, it is a *positive* cruelty; an abstract yet visceral re-composition of subjectivity, authorship, and the work of art itself. The multiple positive tasks of our intervention are at this point clearly delineated. First, to un-hinge the ‘dissolution of the self’ from its anchorage to negativity, and thus ‘free’ Kane from the *reactive* forces of thought, so as to delve into the obscure domains in which her theatre straightforwardly runs to: “a pure staging without author, without actors and without subjects” (*DR* 219), a theatre that, rather than *beyond* representation, is already *done* with representation. (Cull 2012: 6). Second, assuming that Kane’s experiential theatre exceeds the domains of a strictly interpretative approach, we will take the ‘fragmentation of character’ as an exercise of de-personalization closely linked to the Deleuzian conception of *becoming*. Deeply linked to the Kane’s persistent emphasis on experience and presence, our third task will consist of a re-consideration of feelings and affects as non-subjective processes of individuation. Taking into account Kane’s affirmation that her theatre “puts its audience in direct contact with thought and feeling” (qtd in Wallace 98), the event itself will be considered as a pure encounter of forces escaping the dichotomy on-stage action/audience. In this sense, our contention that Kane’s *Crave* ought to be thought from an immanent ontology of pure eventuality goes hand in hand with Kane’s assertion that “these plays [*Crave* and *4.48 Psychosis*] are not about methods of representation” (qtd in

Saunders 2002: 26), and thus the need to prioritize the becoming of forces over the “abstract movement of representation” (Deleuze). The cruelty with which love, loss and desire are presented as incommensurable *affects* has nothing to do with Kane’s earlier explicit violence, but with a more abstract virtuosity: the dramatic realisation that those experiential forces “are too large for the real” (Deleuze, *DR*: 68). If Kane, indeed, inherits Artaud’s theatre of cruelty⁵ is not for laying bare the impossibility of the real, as a Lacanian reading of Artaud would suggest, but by showing how “the system of cruelty creates a body without organs – an asubjective, disorganized body – which evades the system of judgment by creating a platform of . . . becoming” (Zukauskaite 2015: 19). The theatrical event as such, then, can be seen as an assemblage of nonsubjectified affects produced alongside an immanent plane of becoming(s). Kane’s “theatre of sensation” is cruel inasmuch as categories of judgement – self and other, subject and object, presence and absence – are dissolved in the abstract lines of a univocal play of discordant voices. That is, “the uncertainty about where ‘I’ ends, and the world starts” (De Vos and Saunders 2010: 6).

The methodological approach we will be following, thus, has two main branches: first, it is aligned with Deleuze’s differential ontology, or ontology of difference. The motivation of our intervention rests on the premise that Kane’s work has never been thought ‘in itself’ – that is, as a ‘pure event’ – and thus needs to be considered as for the fundamental forces that originate it – that is, adopting an ontogenetic perspective. Focusing on the *ontogenesis* of the theatrical event, i.e. the forces that originate it both at the sensible level (empiricism; affects and percepts) and at the abstract one (transcendentality, pure immanence), will enable an affirmative reading of the main stylistic features of the play: language as pure affectuality, ‘characters’ as differentiated intensities, and the ‘emptiness’ of a time out of joint.

All in all, our intervention is defined as a gesture responsive to Deleuze’s claim that “many authors are too polite . . . and content themselves with proclaiming the death of the I” (5), for it takes Kane’s emphasis on love, hope and desire as driving forces of a theatre that outreaches ‘dramatism’ and its long-standing affiliation with ‘the structures of the real’ and ‘representative thinking’, so as to propose a theatre of pure eventuality. As Clare Wallace points out, “Kane’s experiential theatre is not a mere fetishistic

⁵ See Saunders 2002; De Vos 2011; Wallace 2010.

recycling of an earlier experimental theatre . . . rather it is . . . truth-seeking in aspiration, provocative in its viscosity, fragmenting of character and excessiveness.” (Wallace 98).

2. Beyond theatrical representation: noology, differential ontology, and becoming

The argumentative axes in our introduction have point at the need to re-conceptualise the ‘negativity’ by which Kane has come to represent the crisis of realist theatre – as seen in post-dramatic or post-structuralist critiques (Barnett; Delgado-García) – and explore the ontological possibilities of a theatre that resists (1) a rational, speculative interpretation – and, consequently, an interpretative approach based on ‘identity’ and ‘recognition’, (2) traditional “characterising devices” (Delgado-García 2015: 05), bringing to the fore “non-subjectified” processes of individuation and (3) a static ontotheology of the theatrical event, based on the transcendental principles of an Image of thought – representation, authorship, and so on. In order to proof the means by which *Crave* can be analysed from an immanent, ontogenetic perspective, and hence be considered an event-type individuation – or an immanent flow of becoming, to say it with Laura Cull – we first need to discuss the role of ‘difference’ in Deleuzian ontology. The aim of this first chapter is, therefore, to see how Kane’s ‘scattered fragmentations of characters’ does not point at a helpless dissolution of “self-accountability” and “narratability” (see Delgado-García 2015), but that it actually foregrounds a univocity of Being, premised upon the priority of *difference* in ontological articulation.

I have narrowed down Deleuze’s meta-critique of representation, as developed in *Difference and Repetition* (1990), in three main targets: (1) the freeing of difference from its anchorage to identity – together with the corollaries this has at the ontological level (the articulation of an univocal, affirmative and intensive Being) and at the formal level (the abandonment of thought as judgement in favour of a genital, errant, horizontal thought); (2) the affirmation that repetition is the condition under which ‘events’ take place – i.e. we produce something new precisely because we repeat – and, finally, (3) the liberation of thought from its ‘dogmatic image’, which has condemned it to the stupidity of ‘recognition’. Our main task will consist of a careful unravelling of the means by which ‘performance’ can be conceived as ‘pure eventuality’, that is, as an immanent flow of becoming, and thus debunk it from its confinement to authorial, transcendent principles

of organization – ‘representation’, ‘author/text’, ‘on-stage-action/audience’, ‘text/performance’. We conceive that such approaches drive the potentiality of Kane’s latest non-realist plays of producing a Life of singularities – i.e. a block of *becomings* – to a site of sedentary distributions, with its resultative referential realities, and legitimated moral judgements⁶.

2.1. *The dogma of representation*

In order to show the limitations of representative thinking in theatrical critique concerned with radically experimental dramatic forms, we first need to enquire on the philosophical ‘Images’ that have articulated its main postulates. For this, we will draw upon Gilles Deleuze’s main driving force as expressed in *Difference and Repetition* throughout, that is: the need to free ‘difference’ from its subordination to representative thought. ‘Difference in itself’, according to him, has always been mediated by “the four axes of representation” (Somers-Hall): identity, analogy, resemblance and opposition. It is in this sense that *DR* can be seen as a meta-critique of the traditional image of thought, for all philosophy, from Aristotle to Hegel, has based its premises on representation. Deleuze’s critical gesture, however, is not to be exhausted in this specific exercise of ‘de-territorialization’, as he undergoes in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, whereby difference becomes the univocal, expressive, ontological unit of ‘Being’, and repetition what gives it movement, and thus, a quality of nomadic ‘becoming’. *DR*’s most important chapter, as Deleuze himself attests, is the one in which he “violently perverts” the ‘dogmatic’ Image of Thought – Chapter 3. Freeing the act of thinking from the forces that ‘repress’ it and condemn it to ‘stupidity’ constitutes his most prominent ‘heresy’ to Western philosophical tradition, not only for the richness of his own proposed philosophical ‘method’ – a word he would definitely not use⁷ – but for the intimate correspondence he

⁶ A shift from ‘moral wasteland’ to ‘immanent ethics’ is here suggested, which would serve the purpose of grounding theatrical critique in the work of art’s potentiality to “increase our powers of acting. . . or keep us in a state of passive slavery.” (Zukauskaitė 2015: 20). We maintain this line of flight as a possible starting point for further research projects.

⁷ In his most auto-biographical work: *Dialogues* (1987) ed. with Claire Parnet, Deleuze states that “method is a bad word” (18) for describing his way of thinking, for schizoanalysis “does not happen between persons, it happens between ideas, each one being deterritorialized in the other” (*ibid.*). However, an increasing preoccupation with the question of method has occupied recent work within Deleuzian scholarship (Williams 2012: 34), and “transcendental empiricism” has come to circulate in most prominent interpretations of Deleuze’s main philosophical work. Notwithstanding the lucidity of such term and the effectivity of its implementation in the analytical tradition, Deleuze’s way of reading – i.e. his ‘creativity’ – could well be seen as a process of becoming that exceeds subjective formations, an “intensive way of

henceforth establishes between *thinking* and *being*: that is, philosophy and ontology. The relevance of this *innate correlation* between thought and Being for a critique of “theatrical representation” has been instantiated throughout our introduction as a *need* to ‘free’ Kane’s *Crave* from its anchorage to negativity. It is the aim of this subsection to argue that this is not just a ‘philosophical tendency’ or a question of traditional dramaturgical analysis but a matter of *pure ontology* – indeed, that Kane’s disruption of mimetic character in favour of a ‘block of becomings’ does not merely entail a formal reversal of “characterising devices” but brings about a deeper fracture in how the theatrical event is ontologically creative. Therefore, in alignment with Deleuze’s idea that a system of thought must be looked at from the forces that *motivated* its articulation, what is relevant for our discussion is not his re-reading of the philosophical tradition – that would be a work of genealogical exegesis⁸ – but rather the “method” at work in his conformation of “a thought without image”. If Deleuze’s main drive in *DR*, as he himself confirms, is to liberate thought from “those images which imprison it” (xvi), and “tear” it “from its natural torpor and notorious bad will” (xvi), our aim is to do away with pre-figured assumptions of dramatic form and characterisation, in order to think how ‘what’s there’ immanently can produce, in itself, some ‘sense’. Through an ascesis of sedimented signifying organisations, as we will see, Deleuze brings thought to its limit-point – i.e. its point of unproductivity – and the ‘machine’ to collapse. It is only from this ‘differentiated abyss’ of thought – an immanent surface – that any meaning can arise.

In the preface to the English Edition of *DR*, Deleuze states that “the powers of difference and repetition could be only reached by putting into question the traditional image of thought” (xvi); an ‘image’ that has served the purpose of, on the one hand, regulating and organising the objects which come onto the thinking-process (the good will of the thinker and the concordance of the faculties) and, on the other, has determined

reading, in contact with what’s outside the book, as a flow meeting other flows, one machine among others . . . “ (1995: 8), a process of “reading with love” (*ibid.*) Although this ‘passionate’ way of thinking might be more proliferous in criticism concerned with artistic formations, analytical developments within theoretical philosophy might embrace a more methodological systematisation (see, for instance, Gavin Rae 2014).

⁸ Insightful monographical work on Deleuze’s *Difference and Repetition* has been carried out by: Somers-Hall, Henry. *Difference and Repetition: An Edinburgh Philosophical Guide*. Edinburgh UP, 2013; Williams, James. “Difference and Repetition”. In: Smith, Daniel, and Henry Somers-Hall (Eds.). *The Cambridge Companion to Deleuze*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2012, pp. 33–54. For a deeper insight in Deleuze’s genealogy of univocity, see: Smith, Daniel W. *Essays on Deleuze*. Edinburgh UP, 2012, pp. 27–42. In Essay 2, Smith goes back to Duns Scotus and the Scholastic tradition in Christian theology to historicize Deleuze’s appropriation of ‘univocity’, a term key to the formal development of *Difference and Repetition*, but subsumed by the latter concepts such as ‘Body without Organs’, or ‘plane of immanence’.

“our goals when we try to think” (xvi) – the commitment to truth and recognition. On those lines, philosophy has straightjacketed the powers (or the will to power) of the Different (the identity of difference), the disparate (the ultimate element of repetition) and the discordant⁹, in its ill-wanted preservation of the morality of the thinker and the identity of its seemingly objective ‘knowledges’ about the world. Classical thought, or as Deleuze puts it, “the ideal orthodoxy” (*DR* 143) of the traditional Image which it seeks to re-instate in the phenomenal world – the tree of knowledge, the family-tree, and so on – is unable to bring thinking to a real movement – and, hence, unable to think difference unmediated – because it is unable to pose itself outside the world of representation.

The world of representation is characterised by its inability to conceive of difference in itself; and by the same token, its inability to conceive of repetition for itself, since the latter is grasped only by means of recognition, distribution, reproduction and resemblance in so far as these alienate the prefix RE in simple generalities of representation. The postulate of recognition was therefore a first step towards a much more general postulate of representation. (*DR* 138)

In so far as the “four shackles of representation [identity, analogy, opposition and resemblance]” (Somers-Hall 2013: 110) mediate the *external world* – burying difference and malady – and articulate an “upright thinker”, thinking is coupled with representation, and the real movement of thought crucified by the Image of the former. As Somers-Hall explains: “Deleuze’s problem with the image of thought. . . is that it takes this representation, which is a moment of thinking, to be the entirety of thought.” (97). It is, moreover, not only that taking representation as the entirety of thought is a paralogism, but also that it responds to a subjacent *morality*. Re-reading Plato’s theory of Ideas, by which difference and simulacra are subjected to the requirements of the originality of the model¹⁰, Deleuze attests to this: “the will to eliminate simulacra . . . has no motivation apart from the moral. What is condemned in the figure of simulacra is the state of free, oceanic differences . . . all that malice which challenges both the notion of the model and

⁹ See Deleuze’s critique of Kantian judgement (*DR* 135).

¹⁰ Although we do not have the time to fix our attention on this dialogue, Deleuze’s reading of Plato and his appropriation of *simulacra* are a hallmark in his development of ‘subjectivity’ and ‘identity’ prior to the political ontology elaborated in the collaborative work with Félix Guattari (the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*). For a more profound analysis of the role of *simulacra* in Deleuze’s differential ontology, see: De Bestegui, Miguel. “The Deleuzian reversal of Platonism”. In: Daniel W. Smith & Henry Somers-Hall (Eds.). *The Cambridge Companion to Deleuze*. Cambridge UP, 2012. Deleuze further implements ‘simulacra’ in his *The Logic of Sense*. London: Athlone Press, 1990, pp. 253-266; a critical account of which can be found in Nathan Widder’s “Matter as Simulacrum; Thought as Phantasm; Body as Event”. In: Guillaume, Laura, and Joe Hughes. *Deleuze and the Body*. Edinburgh University Press, 2012, pp. 96-114.

that of the copy.” (DR 264) It is in this sense that the ‘Image of Thought’ is not only noology – a systematic organisation of thought – but also *orthodoxy*.

Reversing the *doxa* implicit in this “history of perversion” entails a prioritization of that which has been degraded to the powers of the negative: the forces of difference, the “unrecognisable *terra incognita*” (DR 136) which has been crucified to the elements of identity. When encountered with that which disrupts the working of the faculties and exceeds the mediation of the *cogito* – i.e. pure difference – thought is no longer conceived as an act of recognition that distributes Being and beings according to the identity of concepts and a mediation through the senses, but becomes *the being of the sensible itself*. This encounter with the being of the sensible, Deleuze will say, is necessarily violent – thought is not a result of an involuntary action, but of ‘absolute necessity’ (DR 139). Hence, thought is born in the necessary contingency of a violent encounter between forces, “the demons, the sign-bearers. . . the intensive and the instant” (DR 145). Those precursors, as we have seen, do not belong to the domain of representation – the *cogitanda naturalis universalis* – for, as we have seen, its postulates are dogmatic and obliterate the powers of difference; the ‘forces’ which originate thought – and thus render it necessarily creative – come from sensibility. As Deleuze states, “It is always by means of an intensity that thought comes to us . . . what forces sensation and that which can only be sensed are one and the same thing” (DR 144).

There are, thus, two important matters for our discussion: one the one hand, that thought is not originated in the *cogito*, but in the encounter between forces; on the other, that the precursors which originate thought belong to the powers of *difference*. The first one locates the ‘creativity’ of thought in the ontological domain, what Deleuze calls the ‘Being of the sensible’; whilst the second foregrounds the work of *le dispare* – the disparate – in the production of truth. What would force us to think, then, would not be a represented identity (for thought is ‘horizontal’ and creative) but an *experienced difference*. It is from this point of view that the ‘theatrical event’ can be considered as a pure encounter amongst disparate forces and our ontological approach be radically immanent. In Laura Cull’s words, conceiving ‘the disparate’ as the springboard of the movement of thought allows “theatre to manifest itself as a non-representational movement that forces thought” (2012: 7). In order to understand the ‘dark precursors’ of

thought – the encounter with the Different, we will now turn to the theorization of ‘difference in itself’, as Deleuze does in Chapter 1 of his doctoral thesis¹¹.

2.2. *Pure difference: the univocity of being*

Deleuze’s heretical rejection of the postulates of representation has led us to the affirmation of discordance, disparity and difference as ontogenetic elements thought. The corollaries of this prioritization of difference are two-fold: on the plane of transcendence, the assertion that difference – understood as the ‘incognita’, the ‘dark precursor’ – is the necessary condition for ‘the new’ to occur¹² (Williams 2012: 37), as we have already developed. On the plane of immanence – which is what will occupy us in this subsection – an a-subjective organization based on this fundamental deviation, or ‘discordance’ of the faculties. In this subsection we will analyse the permutations of ‘difference’ onto the ontological domain of ‘subject-formations’. There are two *moments* in Deleuze’s discussion that are relevant for our intervention: the development of Being as a singular Whole expressed *of* its individuating beings – the univocity of Being; and, second, the transcendental principle of nomadism, which Somers-Hall rightly puts as a “pre-judicate field of becoming” (2013: 43).

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze makes the claim that “there has only ever been one ontological proposition: that Being is univocal” (*DR* 35), and glosses it as follows:

[...] The essential in univocity is not that Being is said in a single and same sense, but that it is said, in a single and same sense, *of* all its individuating differences or intrinsic modalities. . . The essence of univocal being is to include individuating differences, while these differences do not have the same essence and do not change the essence of being . . . There are not two ‘paths’, but a single ‘voice’ of Being which includes all its modes, including the most diverse, the most varied, the most differentiated. Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which it is said differs: it is said of difference itself. (*DR* 36)

¹¹ It is important to mention that our account of ‘difference’ follows the logics of *DR*, and does not include the modifications of *A Thousand Plateaus*. For a deeper account of the role of ‘difference’ in Deleuze’s ontological project as a whole, see: Rae, Gavin. *Ontology in Heidegger and Deleuze: A Comparative Analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

¹² Whilst some Deleuze readers see ‘difference’ as the real transcendental, a priori principle of repetition (Williams 2012); others conceive it the other way around (see Ingala 2018). This ambivalence might be a result of the deeply intertwined role of both notions in Deleuze’s ontology. Difference *and* repetition conform one of the many ‘paired concepts’ that work as a pendulum in Deleuze’s thought: like ‘BwO and the Organism’, or the ‘plane of immanence and the plane of transcendence’, the ‘molar and the molecular’, the ‘sedentary and the nomadic’, ‘bare and clothed repetition’, etc.

Univocity refers, thus, not to a quality of singular unity nor unified substance, but to the transcendental principle that lies beneath all actualized (differentiated) multiplicities (individuating modes). It has the quality of ‘transcendental’ because univocity precedes, a priori, its manifold individuations. Deleuze presents, therefore, an innate correlation between Univocal Being and its ‘individuating differences’. This correlation could be explained, at least but not limited to, in two ways: by following Deleuze’s appropriation of Spinoza’s theory of substances¹³, or by focusing on the differentiator “t/d”, which locates Being at the domain of the virtual, and beings at the domain of the actual. Whereas differentiation refers to ‘differences which are not spatio-temporally designated [not actualized]’, differentiation refers to actualized multiplicities (Rae 118-9). The principle of virtuality and the principle of actuality are, therefore, conjoined similarly as difference and repetition: the virtual (the univocity of Being) is the transcendental condition under which the actual (multiplicities, difference) is unfolded.

Although Deleuze has, at this point, turned Being into an object of ‘pure affirmation’ (DR 40) – since Being is said *of* its multiple actualizations – it still reflects a hierarchical distribution amongst Being and its expressions – the forces of expression are directed at reflecting the univocal substance of Being. In order to conceive of affirmative Being as a malleable structure of *difference* and, hence, dismantle the hierarchy formerly mentioned, Deleuze must replace being with difference (Somers-Hall 39). To do so, Deleuze will appropriate Nietzsche’s concept of ‘will to power’ (*Volonté de puissance*)¹⁴ together with ‘the eternal return’. If the first ontological claim was that Being is univocal, Deleuze will further add that “the eternal return is the effective realisation of the univocity of being” (DR 41). In that sense, the transcendental principle of Being would be that it is affirmatively said *of* its manifold actualizations, but the immanent principle would be that it is effectively realized only inasmuch as it *returns*. Before digging into the specificity of the role of ‘repetition’ in the ontologization of Being, we must analyse Deleuze’s implementation of the Nietzschean formula, and see how he turns ‘affirmative Being’

¹³ See Somers-Hall, Henry. *Deleuze’s Difference and Repetition*. Edinburgh UP, 2013, pp. 35-38.

¹⁴ In the original French works, Deleuze makes use of the vocable ‘*puissance*’, which is unalterably translated in other languages – such as English or Spanish – as power, or ‘*poder*’. Whereas ‘*puissance*’ < Lat. *potens*, - *tia*, means capacity to act/to be/to produce; ‘*pouvoir*’ < Lat. *potestas*, is the *sensu stricto* juridical term to define a legitimated power. Whilst *potestas* (*pouvoir*) is usually associated with that which is effectively operating in an instaurated field – power is effective and actualized – *puissance*, ‘potentiality’, has to do with the domain of the virtual, and refers to ‘1. force, intensity of a phenomenon; 2. Intensity, efficacy of an apparatus’. It would therefore be pertinent to mind the qualitative double ‘nature’ of ‘power’, since overlooking virtuality can lead to errant misinterpretations.

into *intensive* becoming – and, thus, turns ‘Being’ into pure potentiality at work with pluri-centred, affective forces.

Deleuze’s critique of representation through a resultative ontogenetic conceptualisation of thinking – as we have developed in 1.1 – become now of specific importance: similarly to how thought is mobilized by a radical encounter with the obscure forces of the different/d – i.e. it is an experienced difference, or the Being of the sensible, which forces us to think – Being will be produced as an effect of that which causes it to return. If representation fails to capture the affirmed world of difference’, for it has ‘a single centre, a unique and receding perspective [the sameness of identity]’ (DR 55), the experience of the sensible – empiricism – ‘teaches us a strange reason, that of the multiple, chaos and difference’ (DR 57). With this, univocity on its own also fails to grasp the different/cial by which Being is produced, and a ‘chao-errancy’ must be ‘opposed to the coherence of representation’ (*ibid.*). At this point Deleuze implies that, indeed, a ‘more general categorical reversal’ is needed by which “being is said of becoming, identity of that which is different. . . that it exists as a principle, but as a second principle, as a principle *become*.” (DR 40).

In *Nietzsche et la philosophie* Deleuze claims that the Nietzschean principle of the will to power (*puissance*) “does not mean that the will *wants* power or *wishes* to dominate” (2001: 73; cf. 1965), for it is not concerned with already-established values, but in “*creating* and *giving*” (*ibid.*). He is, therefore, implying, on the one hand, that there is no ‘doer’ behind the will, and, on the other, that ‘*puissance*’ is an arrangement of forces that are concerned with creation. In other words, the ‘will to power’ is an affirmative arrangement of vital forces – forces of potentiality (*potentias*), rather than forces of *potestas* (*pouvoir*, power or *Macht*). Those ‘vital forces’, as we have seen, are not mediatable through the representative Image of thought: they belong to the disparate, to the ‘chao-errancy’ of the empirical. With the ‘will to power’ the different (multiplicities, discordances, and so on) becomes the pure *differenciator*, and thus Being is said of the vital forces that push it to its limit-point. Sarah Kofman’s heuristic analysis of Nietzsche’s will to power lucidly glosses this:

A system must be evaluated not according to its truth, but according to its force and beauty: it is a question of knowing whether what made the system possible was a superabundant or a needy form of life, whether the philosopher was affirming or denying life by it (Kofman 1972: 19)

Kofman's terminology: 'a form of life', 'force', and 'beauty' are not to be taken as mere metaphors, but as "zones of continuous variation" (*Negotiations*, 142). They conform the vitality subjacent to Deleuze's more abstract appropriation of Nietzsche, and hence provide an evocative, yet precise, understanding of Deleuze's vitalistic conception of the 'will to power'. What Kofman defines as the forces which affirm or deny 'a form of life' is exactly what Deleuze defines as the *qualia* of the 'will to power': that is, the subjectiveness of the mobile individuating factors that drive forces to act or to react (creation, and/or destruction)¹⁵. The potentiality in the 'will' is a force of affirmation of "the extreme forms . . . which extend to the limit of their power, transforming themselves and changing one into another" (*DR* 41). Power, for Deleuze, refers to the field of differences which organise intensities and modes of existence. Yet, its affirmative forces are "unwilling to allow themselves to be contained within the factitious limits of this or that individual, this or that self" (*DR* 41). We get to the point where an ontology of Being is derailed in favour of an ontology of forces, premised upon affect, force and potentiality as first precursors. There is no Being, but forces which increase or decrease its potentiality to be affected. Recalling the distinction between differentiation and differenciation becomes, again, crucial: *puissance*, the forces which mobilize intensities belong to the domain of the virtual, precisely because they are 'pure potentiality' (*potentia*); whereas the arrangement of affects in individuating or non-individuating intensities belong to the domain of the actual. Yet, potentiality is not only not always actualized¹⁶, but also not always affirmative, for there are forces which diminish our power to be affected. Inasmuch as *becoming* (difference), as Deleuze understands it, is always affirmative: "Being is affirmed of becoming" (*Nietzsche* 89) another principle which seals the 'circle' – univocity, expression and affirmation – is needed. It is at this point that the 'eternal return' plays a crucial role.

2.3. *Repetition for itself: the centrifugal forces of the eternal return*

The eternal return first plays a significant role in Deleuze's earliest monographic work on Nietzsche, where he carries out some programmatic remarks held against common (mis)interpretations of the latter's philosophical concepts. We must draw from

¹⁵ Remember that, for Deleuze, 'reactive forces' are destructive. The triumph of the reactive forces of the will to power – to dominate – provoked the degeneration of philosophy and the triumph of the 'No' over the 'Yes'.

¹⁶ See: Pardo, Jose-Luis. 'Las desventuras de la potencia (otras consideraciones actuales)'. *LOGOS. Anales del Seminario de Metafísica*. 2002, Vol. 35, pp. 55-78; where he suggestingly claims that "the venture of potentiality is precisely the possibility of its non-actualization [my translation]" (Pardo 78).

Nietzsche et la philosophie in order to grasp Deleuze's further implementation of the 'playful logics' of the eternal return in *Difference and Repetition*.

Starting off with Deleuze's claim that "the eternal return is repetition" (*Nietzsche* 91), the structural logics operating amongst the play of 'will to power' and 'eternal return' are explicitly related to the ones amongst difference and repetition. If, the 'will to power' delineates an ontology of intensive forces and the concomitant prioritization of *movement* over a 'static, delineated self', the 'eternal return' provides Deleuze with the 'grounding field' of difference. In other words, Being was first said *of* its modes (univocity), then *of* becoming (intensive differences), and, at this point, "difference must be shown *differing*" (*DR* 56), whilst "retaining the insights given by its [...] intensive understanding" (Somers-Hall 24). What Deleuze means by the 'eternal return' can be effectively grasped with the following parallelism:

The eternal return should be compared to a wheel whose movement is endowed to a centrifugal force that drives out everything negative. Because Being is affirmed of becoming, it expels all that contradicts affirmation. (*Nietzsche* 89)

Yet, how are we to conceive this complex play of 'movement' and 'force(s)' equally fundamental in 'becoming' as, actually, affirmative? Deleuze answers that the return (*revenir*) does not imply that 'the same' (identities, subjects) comes back: what returns is difference in itself: 'only the extreme forms return' (*DR* 41). Only what 'passes the test of the eternal return' *becomes* in the return, because only what is affirmative, what has 'capacity to produce' a/effectively transforms the world (*DR* 41) and, thus, actualizes its potential (*puissance*). Being is throughout this interplay of forces turned, first, into a second principle of *difference* and consequently mobilized as an effect of *repetition*. Yet, Deleuze does not imply that this is a chronological movement, since:

[the] eternal return does not appear second or come after, but is already present in every metamorphosis, contemporaneous with that which it causes to return. . . a complicated, properly chaotic world *without identity* (*DR* 57).

Deleuze is suggesting that 'the return' is not a moment in time, nor a 'casuistic process', but the immanent condition under which an ontology of *becoming* can be upheld. The 'condition' of this return is always yet in operation, since *revenir* is not prior nor second to an instance of the Same, but always already *devenir* (to come/become). This conclusion seems to be plausible if we conceive of 'repetition' as the first ontological principle of

Being (which, as we have seen, is difference in itself)¹⁷. Considering, then, repetition as the real movement of Being, further implies the latter's differentiation, not anymore as a transcendental 'I' of the *cogito*, but as an intensive and affirmative becoming on a purely immanent plane. The eternal return as affirmative transmutation of the 'chaotic world' of difference finally allows us to understand the three main axes of Deleuze's differential ontology: immanence, virtuality and multiplicity. We are now able to fully grasp what Deleuze means when he states that "the only realised Ontology – in other words, the univocity of being – is repetition" (*DR* 303), and come to grips with the implications of an ontology of *becoming*, that is: an ontology in which "Becoming is no longer opposed to Being, nor is the multiple opposed to the One. On the contrary [in which] what is affirmed is the One of multiplicity, the Being of becoming" (*Nietzsche* 86). The most important point to hold onto, overall, is that eternal return *affirms* difference, dissemblance and disparateness, multiplicity and becoming (*DR* 300), meaning that being becomes differentiated only inasmuch as those unknown powers (*puissance*) increase its potency (*potentias*). To assert that Deleuze's ontological project, as developed in *Difference and Repetition*, is an 'affirmative ontology of difference' implies, to recapitulate, bearing in mind that the interplay of difference and repetition (of the 'will to power' and the 'eternal return') is not only differential (i.e. only 'difference' *returns*), but also selective: '[...] All does not come back, because the eternal return is essentially *selective*' (124). The eternal return is, in this sense, 'the expression of the will to power', for it brings back the extreme forms of difference, raising 'each thing to its superior force' (124) – that is: affirming the disparateness and multiplicity of the *becoming*.

Returning to the problematics we issued throughout the introduction, it would be, therefore, pertinent to insist on the discussion of 'crisis', the hallmarks of which are glimpsed in De Vos's and Saunders last publication on Kane (2010) throughout. Wallace contends that "*Crave* . . . find[s] its principal target in the illusion of unified character. . . ." consequently advancing "an obsessive focus upon subjects in crisis, making and unmaking multiple and contradictory selves through language" (Wallace 97). The terrible scenario is, similarly, reproduced in Pankratz's post-dramatic approach to the play: "by speaking in unison A, B, C and M evolve into disindividuated voices . . . thereby losing

¹⁷ Our conclusion seems to be at odds with Williams's, for he takes "difference to be the condition for repetition" (Williams 38). Nonetheless, multiple instances in Deleuze's work lead us to conceive of 'repetition' as the transcendental claim on difference (see the critique to Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 14-19; 'Pure Immanence. . . Essays on A Life', pp. 25-26).

any sense of time, place and authenticity” (Pankratz 157). In order to avoid falling onto narratives of ‘fragmented subjects’ or ‘helpless discordant play of voices’, we ought to question if there ever *was* ‘a subject’, or a ‘concordance’ in the first place. The overarching themes revolving around the crisis of representation, as we have seen with Deleuze, are based upon transcendental illusions, by which Drama is conceived as a mere re-presentation – of a Subject, a Whole, a playtext, and so on. Hence, fragmentation and discordance have articulated the Image of a theatrical critique that grasps no more than subjects in crisis, absence of meaning and unstable narratives.

Through an ontogenetic link between philosophy and ontology, a critique of the representational model of thought has urged a re-configuration of the categories of ‘crisis’. Instead of a metaphysics of absence which privileges forces of reaction (dissolution, fragmentation and disenchantment), over the active forces of affirmation (difference, pure will, immanence and intensities), we have located Deleuze’s differential ontology as a possible line of flight whereby *presence*, *movement* and *forces* can arise as immanent principles of *a* theatre that, rather than re-presenting ‘crisis’, highlights the crisis of representation. Neither ‘post-dramatic’ nor ‘non-representational’, but a theatre of difference and repetition. The *hic et nunc* presence of Kane’s *Crave*, as we have seen, is ‘too large’, too ‘intense’ for representational mediation; the world of difference and repetition cannot be grasped from an a priori principle of Being, only from an ontology of becoming. Before turning our attention to the role of Deleuze’s differential ontology in Sarah Kane’s *Crave*, a brief interlude is needed by which the specific textual discussion is effectively framed within the broader context of the becoming of *Crave* as a theatrical event ‘in itself’.

3. The theatrical event: cruel immanence, vitalistic encounters

The aim of this subsection is to see how the system of chao-errancy constitutes a virtual (in-differentiated but differentiated) *plane* of immanence in which all individuated differences coexist. For, if it applies that our characters constitute ‘series of divergence’ and movements of disarray pertinent to the ‘chaotic world of difference’, there is still a principle which brings them together: the empirical fact that they all co-exist on-stage and the transcendental condition by which they are perceived as a *singular*, “nonpersonal

power” (Deleuze). I will therefore proceed to analyse the theatrical event as an immanent transcendence, that is, as a perfectly determined, yet indifferenciated domain of pure virtuality, for it is precisely from an immanent consideration of the divergent forces that *Crave* presents, that the theatrical event can be conceived as a ‘flow of becoming’ (Cull).

Deleuze sparingly defines immanence as ‘A LIFE’, and nothing else (1995). Prior to the ‘testamentary’ dissertation that we have just mentioned, he had written on the ontological force of ‘Life’ explicitly in his most literary work: *Essays Critical and Clinical*, suggestingly under the title ‘Literature and Life’ [my emphasis]:

To become is not to attain a form (identification, imitation, Mimesis) but to find the zone of proximity, indiscernibility, or indifferentiation where one can no longer be distinguished from *a* woman, *an* animal, or *a* molecule. (*ECC* 1)

Becoming, as we have seen, is not a means ends process, nor a transfiguration of two priorly individuated elements, but an a-subjective, impersonal flow of pure affectuality which brings concepts to their representative undoing. Yet, as specified above, becoming entails an enterprise ‘indifferentiation’, of becoming-indiscernible, which Deleuze compares to a process whereby “a third person is born in us that strips us of the power to say ‘I’ (*ECC* 3). In this way, the aim of literature is defined: “to bring writing to a state of nonpersonal power”. Writing and becoming, literature and life, are two sides of the same coin, working within and towards one another, indiscernible for their ontogenetic proximity. What we are trying to point out is that there is an ontogenetic correlation between life, immanence, virtuality and literature (in our case, theatre). Indeed, Deleuze reminds us that:

There’s a profound link between signs, events, life, and vitalism: the power of nonorganic life that can be found in a line that’s drawn, a line of writing, a line of music. It’s organisms that die, not life. (*Negotiations* 143)

Now, what brings art and life into a process of becoming – i.e. what ensures their non-perishability, or their ‘vitality’ – is, on the side of art, a non-personal power; and, on the side of life: a nonorganic power. That is, their singular (and, thus, determined) yet indefinite existence. Hence, *a* Life is to be conceived as an impersonal singularity. Only in this ‘impersonal’ domain – which, as we ought not to forget, is an ‘excessive form’ – do literature and life acquire their potential to mobilise intensities and allow affectuality to fluctuate.

We are now able to come to grips with Deleuze's ironically testamentary will: to affirm the pure potentiality of life as opposed to anything else. He affirms: "We will say of pure immanence that it is A LIFE, and nothing else. . . A life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power [*sic*] complete bliss." (27). In other words, pure potentiality – i.e. the vitalistic force of becoming, the power of the 'will', *difference* in itself, ... - can only ever be affirmed through the impersonality of 'A life', which escapes the 'accidents of internal and external life' provoked by subjectification (28). Immanence, an a-subjective, pre-reflexive, impersonal, consciousness without a self (25), is the *transcendental* field of 'a life'. This qualitative ontological differentiation, as Agamben has perceptively lined out, is already suggested in the title's punctuation marks. If the <and> in 'Literature *and* Life' (1998; cf. 1993) similarly to 'Difference *and* Repetition' (1968) indicates the playful ontological relation amongst those elements; the colon in 'Immanence: A Life' (2001; cf. 1995) contrastingly, establishes a decisive disjunction: "immanence as singular life. . . absolutely virtual [in] nature, and [defined] through this virtuality alone" (Agamben 224). To say it in another manner: immanence is the transcendental field by which life can be asserted as pure potentiality without being reduced to the 'stiffness' of the actual – the 'accidents' of subjectification. Immanence is the 'wild and powerful' (because disparate) transcendental that brings life onto increases and decreases of power [*puissance*].

Why is this immanent consideration of life and literature relevant for the theatrical event? Because Deleuze will further say that "this indefinite life. . . offers the immensity of an empty time where one sees the event yet to come and already happened" (29). And with this, 'the indefiniteness' of life (immanence), and the 'formless being' of beings (repetition), that is: literature and life, *writing and becoming*, the 'two dissimilar halves of the same coin' become magnificently intertwined. The disruption of the Image of thought (*Difference and Repetition*) brings about the abrupt birth of the 'new' one (Pure Immanence).

Although 'immanence' has no specific locus in Deleuze's earliest ontological project (*LS*, *DR*), the theorisation of the eternal return as a 'pure, empty form of time' whose centrifugal force expels a historical moment or an agent to return, already points at the pure virtuality of Deleuze's last transcendental move. Indeed, the eternal return serves not only the qualitative purpose of differentiating beings (as we have seen, bringing their representation to its undoing), but also the quantitative purpose of constituting "a

totality of time. . . a unique and tremendous event, an act which is adequate to time as a whole” (*DR* 88). Somers-Hall defines the pure temporality of the eternal return as constituting “the metaphysical structure of time itself. . . as the unity of past, present, and future” (2011: 73). In these lines, Deleuze’s differential ontology is inextricably related to the temporal disjointedness of the eternal return, and this is a crucial point for our theorisation of *Crave* as a theatrical move *away* from representation. If Kane’s refusal of ‘character’ as a psychological entity reflects the ‘becoming-mad’ of differences – as will be discussed later – her dis-anchoring of the stage-action from cardinal coordinates is an affirmation of a non-territorialised spatio-temporal organisation, that is: the presentation of a purely virtual event, immanent ‘in itself’.

The ‘emptiness’ of a time off its hinges that we mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation acquires now full ontological potential. The eternal return works, indeed, as a ‘ritornello’: it is the condition under which de-territorialisation can occur, and acts as the transcendental principle that makes the extreme forms *return* under a pure immanent conception of time and space. In other words, it is the paradoxical movement of Deleuze’s ontogenesis: the plane of consistency of ‘chaosmos’, affirming divergence and disarray, and the transcendental plane which re-territorialises becomings within a system of (*cruel*) immanence. The essential point in becoming is that all differences coexist under the pure virtuality of an object = x, says Deleuze. We would come to the conclusion that this ‘pure virtuality’ – i.e. that which makes real the real and makes all differences coexist – is the theatrical event itself. On the one hand, it maintains its indifferenciated nature (its autonomy); on the other, it is differenciated through irreducible, multiple becomings. In other words, the theatrical event is both virtual – ‘ideal by nature, hovering above the bodies that it expresses’ – and perfectly differenciated – actualised in specific spatio-temporal coordinates, i.e. the performance. In this sense, the theatrical event is simultaneously immanent *in* itself – otherwise it would be reduced to specific performances/productions, ‘be defined as a pure plane of immanence’ (Deleuze 26) – and realised *for* itself in “ a milieu (plane or field)” (‘Immanence: A Life’, 32), that is, actualised through multiple, yet singular encounters. Crucial to this is the conception of the theatrical event as an *encounter* amongst forces, rather than a simple actualisation of a virtuality (i.e. a ‘playtext’, a ‘script’, etc.). By conceiving the event as an encounter, that is, as singular spatio-temporal arrangement of bodies, the Being of ‘the event’ is said of its *becoming*, and performance can be conceived as an immanent flow of becoming.

Having outlined the transcendental field of ‘immanence’ by which the theatrical event is simultaneously immanent (in itself) and realised as a collective arrangement of bodies, we will now proceed to examine the nomadic principle of this ontology of forces – the intensive system that *Crave* puts forward. The aim of the next chapter is, therefore, to analyse how the *becoming* of the theatrical event is endowed to Kane’s refusal of realist structures and traditional characterising devices – a formless ‘world of nomadic distributions and crowned anarchies’ which bring theatrical representation to its undoing.

4. *Crave*, or the Drama of losing one’s name

In a conversation with Dan Rebellato, Sarah Kane makes the assertion that A, B, C, and M were conceived as conveying multiple specific meanings that were intentionally elided from the script in order to avoid a rigorous interpretative frame, which would ‘get fixed in those things forever’, impeding their openness to change (Kane qtd in Saunders 2009: 79). Kane’s deliberate refusal of the ‘author-function’ as holding pre-eminence over the play’s meaning, on the one hand, and her will to maintain the indeterminacy of ‘characterisation’, on the other, point at two important matters that ground the particularity of our methodological approach (ascribing meaning and interpretative method). The first one takes Kane’s de-territorialisation of ‘meaning’ from the power paradigm of the ‘author-as-father-of-the-text’ as foregrounding an immanent approach that takes into consideration the irreducible multiplicity of the play’s actualisations – i.e. staged performances. The second, ontologically depend on the first one, assumes that the indeterminacy of Kane’s characterisation not only disrupts the reified correlation between text and performance (i.e. ‘character’ as being embodied by an ‘actor/actress’), but, on a deeper level, that it transforms theatre ontologically. Kane’s assertion that “As a writer I like the fact that no two performances will ever *be* the same” (qtd in Saunders 2009: 85, my emphasis), stands in favour of a re-consideration of theatrical ‘meaning’ from an ontology of becoming premised upon the play’s differential nature. If the death of God propelled the becoming-mad of concepts and the loss of an absolute centre of reference (Kofman 106), the death of the author follows a similar path in the reconsideration of theatrical meaning as no longer being originated in a critical practice of interpretation tied to authorial commentary or a hidden meaning ready-made to be disclosed, but as grounded and de-grounded in the play’s own multiple becomings.

I will proceed with a textual analysis of the final edition of *Crave*, holding up to the remark that *reading* a ‘text’, and even more when it comes to theatre, is merely a “cog in a wider extra-textual practice” (Deleuze in Smith 193) of critical engagement. Having developed the principles of Deleuze’s ontology of becoming under the over-arching *force* of ‘passion’, our main task is to see how an ontologization of subjectless becomings allows an affirmative articulation of Kane’s *dramatis personae*. Winding them into the game of difference and repetition, and thus eschewing them from the law of judgement – *who is speaking? Why are they not talking to each other? Where are they? What does it mean?* – we intend to consider the drama incarnated in their linguistic iterations immanently. That is, a world in which the fractures of the ‘Self’ torn themselves open into intensive cacophony of Signs, and ‘dark precursors’ [*les sombre précurseurs*] mobilize the stage onto the limit-point of its virtuality¹⁸ – indeed, a world in which identity no longer makes any sense, for the latter is only produced “by the more profound game of difference and repetition” (Deleuze 1995: 15).

In order to see how *Crave* presents a ‘properly chaotic world without identity’, rather than a representation of a specific fictional world (Rebellato), I will first focus on the linguistic aspects of the play – the prioritization of rhythm and pace over meaning and referentiality – drawing upon Deleuze’s consideration of language as an ‘intensive regime of signs’. Second, I will turn to analyse the corollaries of this passionate circulation of affect in the field of subjectivity, focusing on Kane’s formal reductionism in characterisation. That is, how Kane’s ‘poetic language’ foregrounds ‘monstrous’ differential becomings and nomadic distributions over identifiable characters or psychological entities. Having developed *Crave*’s main stylistic features as ontogenetic elements of the play, the last subsection deals specifically with the latter’s potential to be conceived as an ‘immanent flow of becoming’, or as ‘a Life’ of multiplicities. The main line of argument is that the aesthetic regime which *Crave* puts forward recasts traditional expectations on theatrical representation, foregrounding rationally unassimilable aspects of performance’s affective potential – *terra incognita*, rather than ‘recognition’, and monstrous becomings, rather than Beings and subjects.

¹⁸ That is, being torn to its limit-point, to its ‘extreme form’ in which its representation becomes undone. (DR 57)

4.1. *The language of Crave: pathos, repetition and the 'excessive' form of poetry*

Marked by the formal reductionism that characterised Kane's latter oeuvre, characters are designated as M, B, C, and A. In this way, they escape the territoriality of a delineated, intelligible, subject; they work as 'denotators of speech', *Textträger* (Poschmann), and not necessarily as 'full-bodied characters' or psychological entities. The location of almost-mathematical designators in a temporality off its hinges points at the non-teleological organisation of *Crave*. A dark space surrounds four bodies on-stage, and the litany of a 'return' marks the mechanicity of a temporality exhausted in its incessant return. On-stage action is overridden by the accelerated rhythm of four voices entwined in a cacophonous speech, the incoherence and non-linearity of which produce a generalized mental stupor. Images of mental exhaustion, physical pain, rape – a car accident, the loss of someone – arise as furious, fleeting snapshots of a stage which, yet, remains obscure and static.

The overarching presence of speech responded to Kane's "deliberate experiment with form, language, rhythm and music" (qtd in Saunders 2009), aimed at '[forcing] the audience to experience the play . . . through the senses' (qtd in Saunders 2009: 34), rather than prompting 'a privileged form of speculative response' (34). Moreover, Kane's declarative statements on *Crave* being a 'text-for-performance' (qtd in Saunders 2009: 95) point at fundamental role that drama had to play in such emotional arrows, dismissing the possibility of considering the play as a poetically imbued monologue, or a mere dramatized reading of a poem. From this view, the drawn elementary correlation between 'drama' and 'words' infuses a critical reading which takes both language as an affective force and performance as a unique platform of poetic and experiential enquiry. Indeed, our contend is that *Crave* manages to stage *experiential* realities beyond theatrical representation due to Kane's dramatic understanding of language. It is in *Crave's* mastery of emotional impact and affective response through a non-communicative implementation of language that we conceive of Deleuze's ontology of difference – or philosophy of repetition – to be a pertinent critical approximation. In this light, Kane's language ought to be re-considered from its innate correlation with *dramatization* – i.e. real movement – rather than being hinged to the law of judgement – i.e. representation, 'false movement of the abstract' – from which its potentiality [*potentias*] will always-

already be bottomed up, ‘domesticated’ by the dogmatic forces of representational thought.

In *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Deleuze glosses his conception of language as “a battle of passions, of joys and sadnesses, of increases and decreases of power [*puissance*]” (ECC 145). This conception of language as an intensive machine of affect-production allows Deleuze to define words as ‘genuine intensities within certain aesthetic systems’ (DR 118), and in this way, to intercede language with the ontological level *becoming*: “repetition is the power of language” (DR 291). If we hold up to Deleuze’s conceptualisation of words as intensive regimes of signs and assemblages of degrees of power defined by its potentiality to affect or be affected, *Crave*’s language arises as a visceral *combat* amongst forces, that is: as ‘a powerful, nonorganic vitality’ intercommunicating ‘force with force’ (ECC 133). For this reason it is unproductive to conceive of the affects that traverse Kane’s characters as emotions which refer back to each character’s own identity – “affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them.” (*What is Philosophy?* 164) – since their suffering does not delimit entities, selves, or ‘stories’ to which the audience can relate or identify with. Rather, Kane’s dramatic personae incarnate a larger Drama: the ‘terrible’ moment in *becoming* where the subject’s centres of envelopment are disrupted by the extreme forms of pure affectuality.

An important remark to hold onto, as we outlined in the introduction to this chapter, is that the ‘excessive forms’ of the eternal return are, according to Deleuze, directly linked to poetry – ‘repetition always involves an excessive Idea of poetry’. This correlation between ontology and art allows Kane’s “poetic drama” (Nightingale 1998: 1152) to be conceived as an ‘intensive regime of signs’. Yet, a regime that is necessarily stranded from the postulates of subjectivism and representation, for its causal force is not referential, and the language’s content is not communicative. Or, to put it in another manner, a linguistic regime whose sense is not located in its capacity to coherently convey information, but rather in its potentiality of affection (arrangement or de-arrangement of intensities, or coupling and de-coupling of series). As Matthew Roberts suggests, the poetic force of which is located no longer in “what it means, but [in] what it does.” (Roberts 101).

Referencing a conversation between Schroeter and Foucault¹⁹, Deleuze states that the *pathos* of repetition does not reinstate subjectivities: passion ‘dissolves[...] persons into a field of various persisting and mutually interdependent intensities’ (*Negotiations* 115). A contrast is made between two different forms of individuation: love interrelates persons within an interlocutory frame, whilst ‘passion’ involves subjectless individuations, tracing a zone of indescirneability between intensities, where one can no longer be restituted as a separated entity. In this light, ‘pathos’ works as a ‘dark precursor’, that is, as a sort of “difference operator” (Deleuze 2004; cf. 1967: 97)²⁰ which turns the subject’s centres of envelopment open, causing the ‘differential intensities’ to pass onto the field of *becoming*. As Deleuze defines it, the dark precursors stands for the disparate in itself, the terrifying *terra incognita* of ‘the different’ that allows differences to intercommunicate (*DR* 145)²¹. *Pathos* is, then, the dark precursor of *becoming*: the force by which differences enter into communication. Since the constitution of intensive individuated arrangements is originated by ‘difference in itself’, and thus escapes the prediction of sufficient reason, those *becomings*, as Williams puts it, enter into ‘unforeseeable, unrepresentable movements’ (12). This is an important observation, for it lucidly explains what Deleuze sees as the ‘monstrosity’ of difference – or its ‘becoming-mad’ – and the sort of becomings which occupy us now.

The ontological monsters of difference are produced when the differentiator affirms disharmony, disparateness, ‘the divergence of series, the decentring of circles’ (*DR* 69) in the same plane of intensity. Deleuze regards it as ‘monstrous’ because what is differentiated is disjuncted from the differentiated. In other words, when ‘the different’ (differentiator) produces forces and intensities (differentiations) which diverge from each other. This ‘terrible chiaroscuro’ of differences, Deleuze says, are like a cruel nuptiality: “[difference] continues to espouse that which divorces it” (*DR* 28). In these lines, the ‘monsters of difference’ underly the relational fluxes amongst Kane’s dependent couples,

¹⁹ See: Maniglier, Patrice and Dork Zabunyan. “Werner Schroeter and Michel Foucault in conversation.” *Foucault at the Movies*. Columbia UP, 2018, pp. 179-191.

²⁰ Transcription from a talk chaired by Jean Wahl from the Centre for Philosophical Research, 3 July 1967 at Université de la Sorbonne. Collected in the volume: Lapoujade, David (Ed.). *Desert Islands and Other Texts (1953-1974)*. New York: Semiotext(e), 2002.

²¹ Deleuze’s re-appropriation of the Kantian notion of the ‘dark precursor’ is imbued by his long-standing interest in cruelty – which some Deleuze scholars attribute to his fascination with Artaud. Henceforth the concatenation of ‘literal metaphors’ usually following Deleuze’s explanations: monstrosity (*DR* 42, 68, 69, 275), terror (*DR* 12, 118, 128, 146, 150), violence (*DR* 120, 139, 146, 165), intoxication (*DR* 46, 280), madness (*DR* 150), etc. For a deeper insight into the cruelty inherent to Deleuze’s ontological project see: Stark, Hannah. ‘Discord, Monstrosity and Violence’. *Angelaki*. Vol. 20, n° 4, 2015, pp. 211-224.

mobilising them in unforeseeable movements of divergence. The clearest example of this, curiously enough, is when 'A', *à la* Beckett's Lucky, articulates the only monologue of the play:

A And I want to play hide-and-seek and give you my clothes and tell you I like your shoes and sit on the steps while you take a bath and massage your neck and kiss your feet and hold your hand and [...]

C, the character whom A was addressing to, exits the scene²². A turns to M, and continues:

and sit on the steps smoking till your neighbour comes home and sit on the steps smoking till *you* come home and worry when you're late and be amazed when you're early and give you sunflowers and [...]

M exits. A turns to B, and goes on:

and hold you when you hurt and want you when I smell you and offend you when I touch you and whimper when I'm next to you and whimper when I'm not and dribble on your breast and smother you in the night (Kane 10-11)

B, the last character on-stage, exits the scene. A remains alone. And continues the speech, now addressing the audience. Saunders's commentary on *Crave*'s premiere at the Traverse Theatre in 1998 analyses A's Beckettian-like monologue as an "outpouring of overwhelming love and desire directed at C." (2002: 107). However, Salamandra's production in Barcelona's Sala Àtrium (2019) schizophrenizes the 'love-speech' into a flux of 'pure affectuality', gradually affecting all bodies on-stage, together with the audience, whom A finally addresses. Dramaturgical choice is henceforth crucial in the multiple becomings of the play. As we see it now: a shift has taken place from a clear-cut speculative interpretation of 'a loving relationship' (between A and C) to the critical questioning of the *limits* of the latter's representability, and thus a more profound problematisation of affectuality has been explored.

This passage is key for understanding how *Crave*'s *pathos* works as a force of affection: it mobilizes 'characters' off-stage, contrastingly to the static, standing position²³ they are assigned throughout the play. In this sense, it is the only force which

²² These are off-script remarks, noted down during *Crave*'s production at Sala Àtrium (Barcelona), March 2019. The dramaturgical decision of Director Loredana Volpe to make the 'characters' exit the stage during A's prolonged speech differs from Vicky Featherstone's decision to let the 'characters' remain sit in chairs, reacting simply through looking away (see *Theatre Record*. 1998: 1152).

²³ This formal feature also diverges from earlier productions, in which "four actors confront [the audience] in chairs. . . turning towards each other" (Billington 1998: 1153). From this, it becomes clear that an emphasis on dynamism has characterised later productions of *Crave*, arguably to contest the feeling of an "actionless word poem" performed by "leaden deposits" (De Jongh 1998: 1153) that Featherstone's direction triggered.

manages to entwine ‘characters’ in “unforeseeable movements” (Williams) of dispersion. The potentiality of A’s speech is found, then, in its capacity to assemble and de-assemble the kernels of the on-stage, collective body. M, C, B, and A arise, therefore, as intensities which become differentiated only under the force of language as ‘dark precursor’, that is: as a combat amongst forces of difference. To perceive ‘characters’ as fluctuating intensities within a collective assemblage contributes to the understanding of the ‘poetic language’ of *Crave*, as we have been stressing throughout, as a pure potentiality – that is, as the power of repetition:

Repetition is the power of language, and far from being explicable in negative fashion by some default on the part of nominal concepts, it implies an always excessive Idea of poetry.
(DR 291)

What is monstrous about the *pathos* in *Crave* is its intoxicating impersonality, the limitlessness in which it fluctuates amongst individuated fields, violently disrupting the limits of oneself. We see this, for instance, in the incessant ‘ritornello’ that traverses ‘characters’ indiscriminately: “C I keep coming back” (Kane 15), “M Keep coming back.” (25), “B I keep coming back.” (26). The excessive forms of *pathos*’s expressions come as pure fluxes of affectuality which work, one the one hand, as a ‘cruel nuptiality’, ‘espousing’, indeed, ‘that which divorces it’ – as we have witnessed in A’s long speech – and, on the other, as an individuating mechanism of subjectless entities – as shown in the passage above. The ‘I’ no longer draws back to a speaking subject, instead: it is torn open by the excessive forms of repetition. The ‘language-machine’ ceases to be dependent on signifying structures – and thus anchored to the Symbolic – and becomes *operative* as real movement of affection. Language, freed from its double – the dogma of representation – no longer signifies or represents; it mobilizes degrees of power (intensities) in ‘the real’ world of differences. To put it differently: *Crave*’s language no longer mediates objects and subjects in the frame of a referential system of communication, but acts as a force of repetition: that is, as an expressive force interweaving a-subjective intensities.

In this sense, what we have regarded as a ‘pure affectuality’ contraposes any sort of ‘emotion’ (be it subjective or not), for the latter cannot be conceptualised in the logics of identification, interpellation and mediation which the ‘representative model’ sees as foundational for our subjectivity. More deeply, we are arguing that there are some affects which can only work sub-representatively, that is, that the ‘obscure forces’ of *pathos*

affect us inasmuch as they do not enter representative mediation. Hanging onto Urban's affirmation that 'a deluge of desires sweeps you along' (Urban 2001: 43), the affective force distilled in *Crave* not only trespasses the centres of subjectivity; it acts as a centrifugal force of self-dispersion. We see this incessantly throughout the play: in the fact, for instance, that C ceases to pose himself/herself as a subjective 'I': "She's talking about herself in the 3rd person" (Kane 18); and, later on, how she undergoes a process of de-personalisation: Where's my personality gone? (Kane 24). C's self-dispossession stands not as a 'psychotic momentum', nor as an attribute which stands as a distinctive of her persona, but as an effect of a larger process of schizophrenization by which all 'characters' "lose boundaries between themselves" (Fordyce 104).

In this way, de-subjectivation and disintegration of the self are not 'the drama of the impossibility of self-presence', nor the *point de capiton* of representation, but the ontological condition under which affects can circulate. Self-dissolution and the consequently violent opening to 'difference in itself' arises as the main step towards the first principle 'become'; we have no longer static subjects communicating through faulty language and, thus, always-already 'unrepresentable', but nomadic differences interrelated by *real* forces and intensities²⁴.

We have seen that the 'unrepresentable ways' in which differences intercommunicate are endowed to the 'dark precursor' of *pathos*: a pure affectuality whose excessive potentiality is affirmed through serial divergences and movements of discord. In the next subsection, we will see how Kane's 'monstrous becomings', for being mobilized by the 'superior differenciator' of *pathos* – the pure affect that traverses them – enter into an immanent plane of 'chao-errancy'. The character's radical combat with the obscure forces of *pathos* – i.e. their differential movement towards the 'terra incognita' of 'affect' – bring about an immanent coexistence of the individuated differences into a world of disarray and nomadic distributions.

²⁴ We are drawing upon the Lacanian sacrology of the Symbolic taking into account Deleuze's explicit refusal of the 'territorializations' of psychoanalysis: "Oh, the poverty of the imaginary and the symbolic, the real always being put off until tomorrow." (*Dialogues*, 51). Most notably influenced by Lacan's phallogocentric paradigm of 'desire-as-lack', De Vos's seminal work on Kane negativizes the forces of *pathos*, driving them 'home' to the psycho-familial drama of "repression" (see 'Introduction', pp. 15-27). This contributes to a disregard of the affirmative legacy of Kane's work, eminently a treatise on "the minutiae of loving relationships" (see Rebellato 1999).

4.2. 'Chao-Errancy' and Nomadic distributions

Sporadic linguistic iterations trespass the naturalized coherence between 'speech' and 'character', whilst the recurrence of empty time 'beats up' a unique and prolonged scene: "M Yes / B No / A Yes / B No [...] A *Beat* [...] C (*Emits a short one syllable scream.*) / A *beat*." (Kane 20). Sarah Kane presents a textual system whose intensive phenomena render the categories of representation (a *who*, a *what*, and a *where*) insufficient. The audience is confronted with flashes of meaning exceeding what we have outlined, together with Deleuze, the 'dogmatic Image of thought', that is, the mediation of empirical phenomena through the identity of representation: on the one hand, the in-itself of the 'represented' (A is A, 'actor' = 'self') and, on the other, the for-itself of the representant (Self = Self; 'actor' is 'character'). Kane confronts us, then, with "a veritable theatre of metamorphoses and permutations. A theatre where nothing is fixed" (DR 56), or, to put it in another way, a spatio-temporal distribution of 'chao-errancy', a "properly chaotic world *without identity*" (DR 57):

With eternal return, chao-errancy is opposed to the coherence of representation; it excludes both the coherence of a subject which represents itself and that of an object represented. (DR 57).

As we have outlined in the former subsection, the eternal return does not correspond to a teleological organisation or time, nor to the suspension of temporality, but to an ontological distribution whereby 'subjects' are torn open to a process of becoming. 'Chao-errancy' as the distribution of the world of empirical phenomena constitutes a 'milieu' (or a plane of consistency) in which identity is said of the disparate and "every object is carried to the extreme form in which its representation comes undone" (DR 57). It creates systems of nomadic distributions and chaotic becomings, as opposed to systems of sedentary distributions and stratified Beings/subjects. If difference is the essence of being, the 'nomadic principle' is the essential feature of univocity (DR 36). The *transcendental principle* of nomadism turns the mono-centred Subject into expressive multiple, and anarchically distributed becomings. Žukauskaitė glosses this: "nomadic [distribution] is without enclosure. . . [it] implies an intensive relationship with what is distributed" (2015: 11). Unity and disarray, anarchy and distribution, divergence and territorialisation, are simultaneously at work in the *equivocal* conception of univocity,

which is not based on ‘analogy’ (see Somers-Hall), but in the more profound principle of *nomadism*.²⁵

From this angle, we can respond to Saunders’s adversative statement that “there is only one character in both of those plays [*Crave* and *4.48 Psychosis*], despite the number of voices present” (Saunders 2002: 159-60), in the following manner: there is only one character in *Crave*, only inasmuch as it is said of all its individuating differences. A multiplicity of voices, each of them differentiations – that is, singularisations – of a being differentiated in the form of nomadic distributions and crowned anarchies. To say it with Deleuze: “a single and same Ocean for all the drops, a single clamour of Being for all beings: on condition that each being, each drop and each voice has reached the state of excess” (*DR* 304).

Now, recalling our discussion of *pathos* as a precursor of pure affectuality – witnessed in *Crave*’s use of the language of repetition – what would bridge the former section with our current focalisation on nomadology is the necessary correlation amongst Deleuze’s conception of differential becomings and his conception of affect. If, “affect is not the passage from one lived state to another, but man’s nonhuman becoming. . . It is a zone of indetermination, of indiscernibility” (*What is Philosophy*, 173), affect as ‘dark precursor’ of being can only work out within the world of differences (a milieu of chaos-errancy); that is, if being is said of difference, and power [*puissance*] is non-stratified, or nonsubjectified. From a Deleuzian conception of affect as a nonsubjectified power it is possible to conceive of “Kane’s trapped and destructive relationships” (Saunders 2010: 69) as monstrous differential becomings. In other words, the zone of indiscernibility that the nonsubjectified affect of *pathos* distributes throughout ‘espouses’ the character’s disjunctive syntheses:

B	I thought that might be why you don't have children.
A	Why?
M	I never met a man I trusted.
C	Why what?
B	You trust me?

²⁵ In this regard, we corroborate the relevance of Emma Ingala’s insistence that the categorisation of Deleuze as a ‘thinker of difference’ obliterates the complexity of his ontology, since the prioritization of difference is not the final step in Deleuze’s ontological project, but rather a momentum in a broader movement of return to ‘unity’ under the principles of schizophrenia or nomadism (see Ingala 2018). For instance: Deleuze’s proposition of a “new harmony [nomadology] based on discord” (Smith); the ‘ritornello’ as a de-territorialised dwelling, the ‘essential opening of univocity’, or the concept of ‘chaosmos’ as a unity of informal chaos.

M	This has nothing to do with you.
C	Why what?
M	I'm not interested in you.
C	Why what, why what? (Kane 7)

The heterogeneous unfolding of voices underlies that exhaustive interweaving of bodies is accomplished through a non-representative *force*. It is not territorialised subjects that enter into ‘communication’ – for there is no principle of ‘recognition’ or ‘identity’ – but rather differentiated intensities. In this light, Deleuze’s system of ‘chao-errancy’ arises as a consistent milieu, for it allows nonsubjectified affects to intercommunicate through discord and disparateness. ‘Subjects’ are dissolved into blocks of becoming, and the on-stage action is perceived as a discordant harmony of voices. In this light, rather than a helpless cry of a subject striving for fulfilment (DeVos), or the mechanistic repetition of de-humanized marionettes, becomings in *Crave* actualise throughout the cruelty of the ontological interplay between difference (will to power) and repetition (the eternal return). The monstrosity of becoming: the drama of the eternal return of those extreme forces which, in one sense ‘encompass everything’ – for they are the genesis of meaning – and, in an other sense, ‘destroy everything’ (*DR* 293), creating ‘intensive, instantaneous and mutant’ fluxes ‘between creations[...] and destructions’ (*Dialogues*, 50).

5. Conclusions

The main purpose of this dissertation has been to affirm the non-representative power of Kane’s latter work, as opposed to the movement *ex negativo* by which *Crave*’s formal features had been conceptualised as representative of crisis. We have shown how the rigorous architecture of representative thought conceives of the theatrical event within a hierarchical system based on sedentary distributions: an *a priori* ‘reality’ and a ‘meaning’ (the playtext) which need to be realised on-stage through entities representative of time, action and characters; and consequently, how the immanent becoming of performance becomes subjectified to an ‘abstract movement’ of mere representation (Chapter 1). For this, we have proposed an alternative approach, premised upon ‘difference’ and ‘pure immanence’ as ontological precursors of a theatre of pure eventuality – immanent in itself (Chapter 2 and 3). Moreover, we have seen how *Crave* disrupts the *doxa* of the representative ‘Image’ by presenting a ‘world without identity’ instead of a mimetic cosmos; fluxes of creation and destruction (intensities), rather than

characters; the pure temporality of the eternal return as opposed to a cardinal time²⁶, inscribing ‘theatre’ in itself onto an immanent movement of becoming (Chapter 4). Summing up, by bringing representation and subjectivity to their undoing, *Crave* raises crucial ontological questions on how collective bodies are arranged and de-arranged through vitalistic encounters. As we have seen, to hold an immanent conception of drama as a theatrical event contributes to an affirmative understanding of the latter’s affective potentiality. More specifically, *Crave*’s formal undoing of the reified categories of ‘character’ and theatrical diegesis *increases* the power of the theatrical medium to bring aesthetic experiences onto an impersonal dimension; and, in so doing, it underpins the cruciality of artistic expressions in the creativeness of new modes of existence – that is, in grounding ever-new possible encounters amongst ‘forces’. As Rebellato contends, by overwhelming realistic structures, *Crave*’s intensely aesthetic experience becomes “perhaps the last remaining ground of collective universal sensations” (2007: 161).

The pure affectuality that *Crave* sets in motion could be, therefore, conceived as pointing to an immanent transcendentality: its pre-judicative experiential condition, unmediatable through representative thought, allows intensities to circulate expropriating subjects from their ‘selves’, carrying the life of the theatrical event to its nonpersonal power, and thus, finally, ensuring the latter’s perdurability and ‘liveliness’ in a purely virtual, or transcendental field of immanence – “The obscure zone of an intoxication which will never be calmed” (*DR* 280). When Kane states: “*Crave* is very specific. It has very fixed and specific meanings in my mind . . . I’ve no intention of telling anyone what it means. So I can’t possibly expect to ever see the same production twice” (qtd in Roberts 98), her emphasis on production – the multiple actualisations of the play – suggests that ‘knowing what *Crave* means’ is no longer the purpose; the aim has shifted from speculative interpretation – based upon a represented identity – to ‘the strange reason’ of experimentation – or an experienced difference. In this sense, the meaning of *Crave*, as Kane suggests, must be said of its multiple *becomings*; representative mediation is subsumed by theatre’s nomadology – the ‘wild’ and ‘powerful’ immanent principle which always makes its expression simultaneously differentiated and indifferenciated, or, in

²⁶ For a full philosophical discussion on Deleuze’s concept of ‘pure temporality’, see the genealogy that Henry Somers-Hall traces from Plato to Kant in: Somers-Hall, Henry. ‘Time Out of Joint: Hamlet and the Pure Form of Time’. *Deleuze Studies*, Vol. 5, 2011, pp. 56-76.

other words, which turns the theatrical event into ‘A Life’ of singular becomings ‘yet to come and already happened’ (Deleuze 2001: 29).

There is a sentence by the end of the preface to *Difference and Repetition* that binds the theoretical-philosophical discussion of the first chapter of this dissertation with the theatrical world of Sarah Kane – specifically, our fixation with *Crave* – and that is: “repetition is *pathos*, and the philosophy of repetition is pathology” (DR 290). The concept of pathos traverses Deleuze’s philosophy as a Whole, from its genesis to its ultimate object: it is the precursor of the real movement of thought, the ‘power’ (*puissance*) which affirms the differential movement of Being, and, most importantly, the fundamental category of the philosophy of the future (DR 12). *Pathos* refers neither to a subjective feeling of passive suffering, nor to an emotion that can be contained within the limits of an individuated ‘self’ or subject (see Terada 2014). Most importantly, *pathos* does not belong to representation. Deleuze explicitly defines it as a zone of indiscernibility between two multiplicities whose *excessive* force disrupts any representative or transcendental mediation: “this is not subjectivism, since to pose the problem in terms of force, and not in other terms, already surpasses all subjectivity (ECC 135). *Pathos* is, therefore, pure affectuality: the *puissance* of the ‘will’ and the ‘dark precursor’ (*le sombre précurseur*) of the eternal return; *pathology*, consequently, would postulate the science of affectuality. The replacement of ‘philosophy of repetition’ for pathology would come to condense the cornerstones of Deleuze’s differential ontology (1968), and yet make one step further into our actual consternation: it establishes the ultimate ontogenetic correlation between art and the science of concepts. It is only from a passionate understanding of ‘philosophy’ that we can apply Deleuze’s statement “repetition . . . implies an always excessive Idea of poetry” (DR 291) to the work of Sarah Kane. The importance of the work of art in Deleuze’s philosophy, as Jose-Luis Pardo points out, is vital. Philosophy cannot reach its full realisation without the undifferentiated domain of the work of art, for the latter’s resistance to the stiffness the actual, is precisely what affirms the vitality of thought²⁷. In these lines, our contention that Sarah Kane’s *Crave* foregrounds the forces of *pathos*, the philosophy of repetition, into the theatrical domain, is a non-restrictive reading directed at expanding, in turn, a philosophical conception of theatre and a theatrical conception of philosophy.

²⁷ For further reference see: “Invertir el Platonismo.” Cos sense òrgans: el gest filosòfic de Gilles Deleuze. MACBA, 6 July 2010, Plaça dels Àngels, Barcelona. Lecture.

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